

Mr. M. Bhuthalingam Pillai (Eraniel) said that he learnt that a portion of the existing Hindu satroms was to be set apart for the use of Christians and Mahomedans, but as this would be inconvenient, he prayed that separate satroms, where necessary, might be built at Government cost for them also.

Mr. G. H. Gunther (Catholic Indian Association, Trivandrum) said that Europeans and Eurasians could use Travellers' Bungalows and Hindus could accommodate themselves in Government satroms. Native Christian travellers were not permitted at present to resort to either of these buildings and this resulted in much inconvenience and hardship to them. He therefore prayed that early steps might be taken by Government for giving them some protection on the way.

Mr. Warkey John (Travancore and Cochin Roman Catholic Association, Kottayam) represented that the treatment accorded to Native Christians in this respect was inconsistent with the liberal policy pursued by Government.

Reply.—The answer given last year seems sufficient, viz., that the matter will be considered as funds permit. But any special arrangement which does not involve heavy cost or the erection of separate buildings will be considered, if proposed in reference to particular places.

188. Delay in the grant of applications for permission to erect churches.

Mr. G. H. Gunther (Catholic Indian Association, Trivandrum) said that generally permission for building places of Christian worship was granted expeditiously enough, but in some individual cases owing to the delay and dilatoriness of subordinate officers much inconvenience was caused to the applicants. He requested the issue of stringent instructions for preventing the delay complained of.

Mr. Warkey John (Travancore and Cochin Roman Catholic Association, Kottayam) pointed out that in former times permission for the erection of churches used to be granted more freely than now, and in places like Parur, Alleppey and Kallupara, Hindu and Christian places of worship were built on adjoining lands. In these days, however, the presence of a snake-grove or the image of a Dharmadaiva or even a solitary Hindu dwelling anywhere near was deemed sufficient reason for withholding the permission so earnestly sought. The

rules were interpreted rather too strictly and the result was that applications were refused in several deserving cases.

Reply.—Permission is necessary under the Royal Proclamation and cannot be dispensed with. Information is called for on certain matters which are deemed to be absolutely necessary in the interests of public peace and the rules apply not only to Christian churches, but also to Hindu temples and Mussalman mosques. I do not know of another country where there is so much of religious toleration as Travancore, and if a preliminary enquiry is conducted before formal sanction is given for the erection of a place of public worship, it is not because the permission applied for should not be granted, but with a view to avoid all possibilities of riots or friction in the future. As regards the delay complained of, steps will be taken to minimise it as much as possible.

189. Desirability of Government lending money for house-building.

Mr. G. Sankaranarayana Iyer (Shencottah) said that in congested areas fires frequently occurred and the Government now granted reeds and bamboos free of cost to the sufferers in some cases. As this temporary relief did not completely protect house-owners from future danger, the member suggested that money might be lent to them at low interest to tile their buildings.

Reply.—The Towns Conservancy and Improvement Regulation contains a provision for affording relief in certain directions. Beyond this it is not possible for Government to go and grant the prayer now made. In cases of wholesale conflagration due to accident or even mishap, specific recommendations made by Peishkars as to the grant of timber, bamboo, &c., will be considered. Similar relief will be afforded in cases of submergence by floods also.

190. Establishment of a National Bank with the aid of Government.

Mr. S. Swamy Iyengar of Trivandrum (Nominated) brought forward this subject.

Reply.—This is not practicable. But if banks are started by private agencies, the question of what aid could be given by Government will be considered.

191. Giving all Government contracts to Natives,